



Cigarette butts are litter, too!

Did you know that four out of five smokers do not consider a cigarette butt to be litter?

It's true. Conscientious people who wouldn't dream of tossing an empty Styrofoam cup from their car window think nothing of flicking the last of their cigarette out the same window. If pressed, they might say, "It's just one cigarette; it's biodegradable, so what's the problem?"

Here's the problem:

Cigarette butts are the most widely littered item in the world. Anything discarded in a public place that is not placed in a trash bin is litter. Period.

Cigarette filters are not biodegradable. They are made of plastic cellulose acetate, and they take a long, long time to degrade.

Cleanup crews have difficulty picking up cigarette butts because of their small size. They're also smelly, toxic and unsightly.

Wildlife frequently mistake the butts for food. When ingested, the 165 chemicals found in cigarettes may cause the animals to choke, have digestive problems and even die.

Cigarette butts that aren't fully extinguished can - and do - spark wildfires.

If you smoke and have not been putting your cigarette butts in containers, you can choose to be part of the solution to the problem:

Make sure you fully extinguish your cigarettes and place the butts in a proper receptacle.

Use a personal ashtray made of metal or fire-resistant plastic for those times when there are no public receptacles for cigarettes.

*This monthly **DON'T TRASH AZ** message is brought to you by the Office of Governor Janet Napolitano and the Arizona Department of Transportation.*